

AMENDMENT

Please amend the above-identified application as follows:

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please add the following two independent claims:

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--126. A distributed electronic tournament system in which a plurality of remotely located players participate in a tournament through input/output devices connected to a central controller which manages the tournament, the system comprising:

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- (a) means for uniquely identifying one of the players communicating with the central controller via one of the associated input/output devices;
 - (b) means for allowing the player to participate in the tournament via the associated input/output device upon payment of an entry fee; and
 - (c) means for storing in a database player information that is generated as the player participates in a game of the tournament, such information being available for use in a subsequent tournament, which is administered by said controller, wherein the means for allowing:

provides a plurality of payment options;

stores a payment option selected by the player in the tournament;

and

automatically activates the selected payment option after the player has been identified in a subsequent tournament.--

~~123~~
--127. A distributed electronic tournament system in which a plurality of remotely located players participate in a tournament having multiple game sessions

through input/output devices connected to a central controller which manages the tournament, the system comprising:

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concl.
- (a) means for uniquely identifying one of the players communicating with the central controller via an associated input/output device;
 - (b) means for allowing the player to participate in a particular game session via the associated input/output device upon payment of an entry fee;
 - (c) means for determining whether the player has been qualified to advance to a subsequent game session based on player information generated during participation in the particular game session, wherein at least one player from the particular game session is eliminated; and
 - (d) means for permitting each player qualified to the subsequent game session to participate in the subsequent game session, wherein the means for allowing includes:
 - means for providing at least one payment option;
 - means for storing a payment option selected by the player in the particular game session; and
 - means for automatically activating the selected payment option after the player has been identified in a subsequent game session for payment of a subsequent game session entry fee.--
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